

SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
Air Information Division

MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT MERRILL LEE

Robert M. Lee was born at Hinsdale, New Hampshire, April 13, 1909, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Merrill T. Lee. When he was four years old the family moved to Augusta, Maine, where he was graduated from Cony High School. He then entered the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, from which he was graduated June 11, 1931. That same date he was commissioned a second lieutenant of Cavalry in the Regular Army.

His first assignment was as a student at the Air Corps Primary Flying School at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. After graduation he transferred to the Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Kelly AFB, Texas, and upon completion of that course in October, 1932, was assigned to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, as post exchange, assistant post ordnance, and chemical officer of the 55th Pursuit Squadron. He later served with the 71st Service Squadron at Barksdale AFB.

In March, 1937, he transferred to the Cavalry and was assigned to Troop "C", First Cavalry, Mechanized, at Fort Knox, Kentucky. A year later he returned to the Air Force and took a course at the flying school at Randolph AFB. Upon completion of his studies at that school, he went to Kelly AFB, where he took the observation course at the advanced flying school.

In November, 1938, he became aide-de-camp to Brigadier General A. R. Chaffee, who was then serving with the Seventh Cavalry Brigade at Fort Knox. He entered the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, in January, 1940, and was graduated three months later. He then returned to his duties as aide-de-camp to General Chaffee, at the same time serving as assistant post intelligence and post public relations officer. In July, 1941, while still at Fort Knox, he was made air officer of the First Armored Corps.

The following February he assumed command of the 73rd Observation Group, which was originally stationed at Godman AFB, Kentucky, and later moved to Fort Knox. In December, 1942, he went to Morris AFB, North Carolina, where he became chief of staff of the First Air Support Command. He retained that position when it was changed to the First Tactical Air Division, and later when it was redesignated the Third Tactical Air Command and moved to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana.

He went overseas in August, 1944, to join the U. S. Strategic Air Force headquarters in England. Ten days later he transferred to the Ninth Air Force in France and on September 14, 1944, became deputy commanding general for operations of the Ninth. In July, 1945, he was appointed chief of staff of the Ninth Air Force, and in October of that year was assigned to the Theater General Board for duty with the Air Section.

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In January, 1946, he returned to the United States and was assigned to Third Air Force headquarters at Tampa, Florida, where he became chief of the Plans Division. The following April he was appointed chief of staff of the newly-organized Tactical Air Command, with headquarters at Langley AFB, Virginia. He remained in this position until September, 1946, when he was transferred to Washington, D. C., to be a student in the first class of the National War College. Upon completion of the course in July, 1947, he returned to Tactical Air Command headquarters to become deputy commanding general.

In November, 1948, he assumed command of Tactical Air Command.

General Lee has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal, and Air Medal. He also wears the European theater ribbon with battle stars for the Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe campaigns, the American theater ribbon, American Defense ribbon, and Commendation ribbon.

His foreign decorations include the French Legion of Honor in the grade of Chevalier and the Croix de Guerre with Palms; the Belgian Commander of the Order of Leopold II with Palm and Croix de Guerre with Palm; and the Luxembourg Order of Merit of Adolphe of Nassau, Degree of Commander with Crown and Croix de Guerre.

He is rated a Command Pilot, Combat Observer, and Aircraft Observer.

General Lee and his wife, the former Miss Mary Hall Van Pelt, of Montgomery, Alabama, have two sons, Richard William, four years, and Robert Merrill, Jr., 17 months.

PROMOTIONS

He was promoted to first lieutenant (permanent) on August 1, 1935; to captain (temporary) on September 9, 1940; to captain (permanent) on June 11, 1941; to major (temporary) on July 15, 1941; to lieutenant colonel (temporary) on January 23, 1942; to colonel (temporary) on July 27, 1944; to brigadier general (temporary) on January 25, 1945; to major general (temporary) on November 2, 1947; to colonel (permanent) on April 2, 1948.

E N D

Up-to-date as of 18 November 1948

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION
PRESS BRANCH

MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT MERRILL LEE, USAF

Robert Merrill Lee was born in Hinsdale, New Hampshire, April 13, 1909, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Merrill T. Lee. When he was four years old the family moved to Augusta, Maine, where he was graduated from Cony High School. He then entered the U. S. Military Academy from which he was graduated June 11, 1931, and commissioned a second lieutenant of Cavalry.

His first assignment was as a student at the Air Corps Primary Flying School at Randolph Field, Texas. After graduation he transferred to the Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas, and upon completing that course in October, 1932, was assigned to Barksdale Field, Louisiana, as post exchange, assistant post ordnance, and chemical officer of the 55th Pursuit Squadron. He later served with the 71st Service Squadron at Barksdale.

In March, 1937, General Lee transferred to the Cavalry and was assigned to Troop "C", First Cavalry, Mechanized, at Fort Knox, Kentucky. A year later he returned to the Air Corps and took a course at the flying school at Randolph Field. He then went to Kelly Field, where he took the observation course at the advanced flying school.

In November, 1938, General Lee became aide-de-camp to Brigadier General A. R. Chaffee, who was then serving with the Seventh Cavalry Brigade at Fort Knox. He entered the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, in January, 1940, and was graduated three months later. He then returned to his duties as aide-de-camp to General Chaffee, at the same time serving as assistant post intelligence and post public relations officer. In July, 1941, while still at Fort Knox, he was made air officer of the First Armored Corps.

General Lee, in February, 1942, assumed command of the 73rd Observation Group, which was originally stationed at Godman Field, Kentucky and later moved to Fort Knox. In December, 1942, he went to Morris Field, North Carolina, where he became chief of staff of the First Air Support Command. He retained that position when it was changed to the First Tactical Air Division, and later when it was redesignated the Third Tactical Air Command and moved to Barksdale Field.

In August, 1944, General Lee joined the U. S. Strategic Air Force headquarters in England. Ten days later he transferred to the Ninth Air Force in France and on September 14, 1944, became deputy commanding general for operations of the Ninth. In July, 1945, he was appointed chief of staff of the Ninth Air Force, and in October of that year was assigned to the Theater General Board for duty with the Air Section.

MORE

In January, 1946, General Lee was assigned to Third Air Force headquarters at Tampa, Florida, where he became chief of the Plans Division. The following April he was appointed chief of staff of the newly-organized Tactical Air Command, with headquarters at Langley Field, Virginia. He remained in this position until September, 1946, when he became student in the first class of the National War College. Upon completion of the course in July, 1947, he returned to Tactical Air Command headquarters to become deputy commanding general.

General Lee was assigned in November, 1948, to command of Tactical Air Command. He assumed additional duty as commander of Task Group 3.4 (AF), Joint Task Force 3, in January, 1950. In July, 1950, he was relieved as commanding general of Tactical Air Command and assigned full duty as commander of Air Task Group 3.4 with station at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Air Task Group 3.4 the aerial portion of Joint Task Force 3, carried out atomic weapons tests at Eniwetok Proving ground during April and May, 1951.

In July, 1951, General Lee became Deputy Director of Plans in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations at Air Force Headquarters.

General Lee has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal, and Air Medal. He also wears the European theater ribbon with battle stars for the Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe campaigns, the American theater ribbon, American Defense Ribbon, and Commendation ribbon. His foreign decorations include the French Legion of Honor in the grade of Chevalier and the Croix de Guerre with Palms; the Belgian Commander of the Order of Leopold II with Palm and Croix de Guerre with Palm; and the Luxembourg Order of Merit of Adolphe of Nassau, Degree of Commander with Crown and Croix de Guerre.

He is rated a command pilot, combat observer, and aircraft observer.

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END

Robert M. Lee was born at Hinsdale, New Hampshire, on April 13, 1909. He was graduated from the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, on June 11, 1931, on which date he was commissioned a second lieutenant of Cavalry in the Regular Army.

PROMOTIONS

He was transferred to the Air Corps on January 25, 1933, and was promoted to first lieutenant on August 1, 1935; to captain (temporary) on September 9, 1940; to captain (permanent) on June 11, 1941; to major (temporary) on July 15, 1941; to lieutenant colonel (temporary) on January 23, 1942; to colonel (temporary) on July 27, 1944; to brigadier general (temporary) on January 25, 1945.

SERVICE

He first became a student at the Air Corps Primary Flying School, Randolph Field, Texas, and later completed a course in the Pursuit Section of the Air Corps Advanced Flying School, Kelly Field, Texas. In October 1932 he was assigned to Barksdale Field, Louisiana, as Squadron, Post Exchange, Assistant Post Ordnance, and Chemical Officer of the 55th Pursuit Squadron, later serving in the same capacity with the 71st Service Squadron. After five years at that station he was ordered to Fort Knox, Kentucky, in May 1937, where he became a Troop Officer with the 1st Cavalry. In March 1938 he returned to the Air Corps Primary Flying School at Randolph Field, and upon completion of a course there, proceeded to Kelly Field to pursue further studies at the Air Corps Advanced Flying School, this time in the Observation Section.

In November 1938 he became Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier General A. R. Chaffee, who was then serving with the 7th Cavalry Brigade at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and in January 1940 was enrolled as a student at the Air Corps Tactical School, Maxwell Field, Alabama. After completing a three months' course he resumed his duties as Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier General Chaffee, at the same time serving as Assistant Post Intelligence and Post Public Relations Officer. In July 1941, while still stationed at Fort Knox, he was made Corps Air Officer, Headquarters I. Armored Corps, continuing those duties until February 1942, when he assumed command of the 73rd Observation Group, which was originally stationed at Godman Field, and later moved to Fort Knox, Kentucky.

His next assignment took him to Morris Field, North Carolina, where he joined the I Air Support Command, and in July 1943 he became Chief of Staff of the I and III Tactical Air Commands. Early in 1944 he moved with his organization to Barksdale Field, Louisiana.

He is rated a Senior Pilot, Combat Observer, and Aircraft Observer.

WAR DEPARTMENT - Up to date as of March 13, 1945.